

WE SEE YOU. WE HEAR YOU. WE STAND WITH YOU.

**A Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion, and
Belonging Plan**



COLUMBUS STATE

UNIVERSITY

WE SEE YOU.

We recognize the importance of policies and practices to amplify equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging in Columbus State University's Department of Theatre. All students in an educational setting should feel safe, seen and validated.

WE HEAR YOU.

We firmly believe in diversity and the basic human right to justice as a means of ensuring equal opportunity for all. The learning environment should reflect—through appropriate representation and relevant policies—the multicultural society in which we live, learn and perform. We encourage students to use their voices to promote equality.

WE STAND WITH YOU.

Our goal is to create a supportive environment that responds to evolving needs on our campus, in our community and in our industry. We are committed to infusing the principles of diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and belonging into every aspect of the department.



Source: Kryss Burnette, "Belonging: A Conversation about Equity, Diversity and Inclusion," Jan. 21, 2019



ABOUT THE TASK FORCE

In December 2020, Columbus State University commissioned a departmental-level task force charged with creating processes, practices and accountability measures to recruit, support and retain departmental faculty and staff with a demonstrated commitment to promoting diversity, inclusion and equity. The task force was a partial university response to an investigation into claims of racial bias and discrimination in the Theatre Department made by students and alumni. This plan is a result of the task force's work throughout the spring 2021 semester as members considered and responded to the recommendations resulting from that investigation.

“ It is our hope that CSU Theatre can lead the charge for the entire university and model for other arts institutions across the country what effective change and action look like for students now and students to come. ”

— Beth Reeves '09, '17
Task Force Chair



TASK FORCE MEMBERS

Beth Reeves '09, '17

Task Force Chair
Part-time CSU faculty
and Director of Educational
Outreach, Springer Opera House

Bryan Dewsbury, Ph.D.

Gardner Institute Fellow
and Associate Professor,
University of Rhode Island

Jo Anne Hill

Executive Director of Diversity
and Inclusion
Piedmont Healthcare

Krystal Kennel

Professor
CSU Theatre Department

David McCray '18

Box Office Manager
CSU Theatre Department

Lauren Pollock

CSU Theatre student
and President, Theatre of Color

Michael Stiggers '09

Professional actor, singer
and voiceover artist

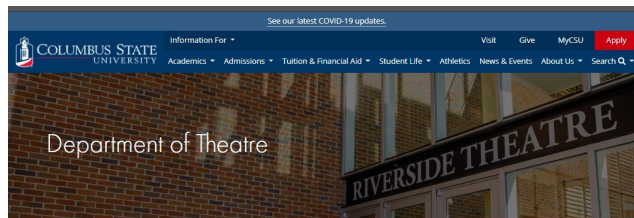
Gabby Story

CSU Theatre student

David Turner

Associate Professor
CSU Theatre Department

TASK FORCE OUTREACH



Columbus State University / Academics / College of the Arts / Department of Theatre / CSU Theatre Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Task Force

- Theatre Home
- DEIB Task Force Home**
- About the DEIB Task Force
- Our Members
- Play Selection and Casting Plan of Action
- A Special Message to Theatre Alumni
- Theatre DEIB Task Force Blog
- Task Force Recommendations

CSU Theatre Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Task Force

An Introduction by Task Force Chair Beth Reeves

We See You. We Hear You. We Stand with You.

We See You. We are a committee that recognizes the importance of developing precise policies and practices to amplify equity, diversity, inclusion and belonging in Columbus State University's Department of Theatre. We are advocates who support all students feeling safe, seen and validated within an educational setting.

We Hear You. We firmly believe in celebrating diversity; it is the basic human right to justice that leads to equal opportunity for all. By doing so, we find it crucial that the learning environment should reflect the increasingly multicultural society in which we live, learn and perform through proper representation and policies. We encourage students to use their voices to promote equality.

We Stand with You. We are currently in the process of developing and executing a plan of action. Our goal is to create a supportive environment that will be responsive to ever-changing and evolving needs around equity on our campus, in our community, and in our industry. We will strategize how to create a safe space for the student today in

Columbus State University Theatre Department DEIB Task Force

June 23, 2021

As the Theatre Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Task Force concludes its work, its membership has published its recommendations on the task force website. These recommendations include: adopting faculty development opportunities that can better instill an inclusive mindset within the department adapting and expanding the theatre curriculum to better recognize the LGBTQIA+, neurodiverse, BIPOC and disabled communities, as well as opportunities and programming that include and recognize these communities and their perspectives. explore deeper and broader

[READ MORE](#)

Creating a 'shining example' for diverse, inclusive theatre education

May 25, 2021

Michael Stiggers, a 2009 Columbus State alumnus, theatre professional and member of the Theatre Department Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Task Force member shares about his role and the work of the task force. Learn more about the task force, its members and the reasons behind its formation by visiting <https://theatre.columbusstate.edu/deib-task-force>.

Location: 4225 University Ave, Columbus, GA 31907, USA

[READ MORE](#)

Putting 'we see you, we hear you' into action

May 18, 2021

Theatre Department Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Task Force member Dr. Bryan Dewsbury shares about his role on the task force. Dr. Dewsbury's teaching and research activities at the University of Rhode Island, where he is an associate professor in the College of the Environment and Life Sciences, includes conducting faculty development across North America and helping institutions of higher education transform their practices toward more equitable

Department of Theatre at Columbus State University
May 28 · 🌟

Thank you to our Alum, Michael Stiggers, for this very important message from the the DEIB Task Force.

<https://csu-theatre-deib-task-force.blogspot.com/.../crea...>

CSU-THEATRE-DEIB-TASK-FORCE.BLOGSPOT.COM

Creating a 'shining example' for diverse, inclusive theatre education

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Website

[theatre.columbusstate.edu/
deib-task-force](http://theatre.columbusstate.edu/deib-task-force)

Blog

[csu-theatre-deib-task-
force.blogspot.com](http://csu-theatre-deib-task-force.blogspot.com)

Facebook

[facebook.com/
Theatre.ColumbusState](https://facebook.com/Theatre.ColumbusState)

ACADEMICS

- Programs will include courses on a diverse range of topics.
- Courses will be inclusive in practice and diverse in content.
- The department will identify and act on achievement gaps.

Assessment instruments:

- DEIB-based questions on student course evaluations.
- Annual holistic scoring guide for programs and courses.
- Student success data disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, Pell eligibility, first-gen status, age, and other demographic categories.

PRODUCTION

- ❑ Season selection will be guided by the values of diversity and inclusion, and will be representative of our community.
 - Create seasons of diverse stories that include American Realism, Musicals, Shakespeare, Experimental, Ensemble, Children’s Theatre, Period Pieces, and World Drama.
 - Seek out plays that bring a diversity of content, themes and authorship.
 - Invite guest artists who add diversity to the department’s programming.
 - Increase audience diversity.
- ❑ Casting will create opportunities for diversity and inclusion.
 - Practice non-traditional and color-conscious casting, while avoiding tokenism.
 - Avoid harmful stereotypes and caricatures.

Assessment instruments:

- ❑ Production and season post-mortems that emphasize the values of diversity, inclusion, equity and belonging.
- ❑ Ongoing analysis of audience diversity.

CLIMATE

- During orientation, new students will be introduced to the department's DEIB plan—a central statement of values of all departmental operations.
- The department will recruit a diverse student body.
- The department will recruit and retain a diverse faculty as faculty positions become available.
- Faculty, staff and students will participate in ongoing training to increase DEIB awareness and skills.
- All faculty, staff and students will have the ability to register complaints, comments and feedback, which will be promptly acknowledged and acted on.

Assessment instruments:

- Annual climate survey of all students, staff and faculty.
- Annual analysis of recruitment practices and results for faculty, staff and students.
- Annual survey of participation in training opportunities.
- Ongoing analysis of feedback and complaint process.



ACCOUNTABILITY

The department will routinely assess its progress, using the previously mentioned assessment instruments, to ensure its DEIB goals are being met and to improve policy and practice.

- ❑ A standing DEIB Committee will be appointed by the chair and approved by the dean, constituted in the following way:
 - Two Theatre Faculty
 - Two Theatre Students
 - Two Theatre Alumni
 - At least two members from outside the Theatre Department (CSU faculty, diversity experts from inside or outside CSU, key community members, or others as needed)
- ❑ A diversity officer will be appointed annually from among the faculty by the department chair; the DO will chair the DEIB Committee and lead the annual DEIB assessment process.
- ❑ Annual Program Reviews and Comprehensive Program Reviews will include results and discussion of the department's DEIB goals.

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